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Kernan Announces Grants to Train 1,853 Workers at Three Southwestern Indiana Companies

INDIANAPOLIS — Lt. Governor Joe Kernan announced today that three southwestern Indiana companies would receive training grants from the Indiana Department of Commerce Skills Enhancement Fund.

"We're please to assist these companies with their growth," said Kernan, who leads the state's economic development efforts. "When businesses boost their performance through training and hiring, as well as by upgrading equipment and technology, everyone benefits."

- **Alcoa Warrick Operations**, Newburgh, has been awarded a \$200,000 grant to train 1,082 incumbent employees as part of a \$22 million investment in upgrading equipment. Alcoa is the world's leading producer of aluminum. Founded in 1888, it ranks in the top 100 among *Fortune* 500 companies and operates in 40 countries worldwide. Alcoa will provide training in basic Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC), crane controls, rigging, hydraulics, conduit bending, fiber optics, pump and seals, welding, computer skills, metallurgy and quality control processes.
- **Berry Plastics Corp.**, Evansville, received a \$210,500 grant to train 50 new and 652 existing employees in conjunction with the company's \$18 million investment to purchase new equipment. Originally established in 1967 as Imperial Plastics, Berry Plastics has grown into a leading U.S. manufacturer of injection-molded plastics packaging. It became Berry Plastics in 1983 and has completed several company acquisitions. Using the Commerce funding, the company will offer training in algebra, train-the-trainer, thermoforming, molding, maintenance, team building, operator and advanced operator training, statistical process control (SPC) and quality control.
- **Pepsi-Cola General Bottlers, Inc.**, received a \$36,500 grant that will be spilt among its Evansville, Jasper, Seymour and Vincennes facilities. The grant will be used to train 119 existing associates following the company's investment of \$918,256 to upgrade buildings and equipment and purchase land. Pepsi-Cola, the third-largest soft drink bottler in the world, operates manufacturing, distribution, bottling, refurbishment and vending centers throughout the world. Training offered as a result of the grant includes advanced refrigeration, team building, hydraulics, computer skills, loader training, warehousing, cross training and NextGen training.

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The Commerce department awards Skills Enhancement Fund grants to Indiana companies that undertake capital investment projects. The grants help defray the costs of training new and current employees in basic work skills and company-specific skills necessary to support the project. Companies interested in learning more about the Skills Enhancement Fund or other Commerce programs should contact the Economic Development Division at 800.463.8081, or visit the Web site at www.indianacommerce.com.

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